



**Ninth Annual Conference**  
**“Latinos and Immigrants in**  
**Midwestern Communities”**

**Columbia, Missouri**  
**May 24-26, 2010**

Organized by the University of Missouri’s Cambio Center  
in cooperation with the Multistate Research Project "Latinos  
and Immigrants in Midwestern Communities" – North Central  
Regional Center for Rural Development.

**CONFERENCE PRESENTER BIOS**  
**(DRAFT)**

*This draft document is intended for the convenience and exclusive use of  
conference participants. It does not include all presenters.*

University of Missouri – Columbia

Prepared with the assistance of Chu-Chun Fu



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May, 2009

DRAFT – NOT INTENDED FOR ACADEMIC CITATION.

**Kimberly Allen, *North Carolina State University***

Dr. Kim Allen serves as an Assistant Professor and Human Development Extension Specialist at North Carolina State University. Dr. Allen has the great opportunity of teaching graduate students and supporting Extension Agents across North Carolina by partnering, designing, implementing and evaluating programs that foster healthy children, families and communities. Dr. Allen's work at NCSU focuses on child and youth development, adolescent health, parenting, and relationship education.

**Robert J. Barrientos, *RJ Barrientos & Associates, Kansas City***

Robert Barrientos has a consulting practice working with not-for-profit and for-profit corporations in strategic planning, public relations and community outreach, in Kansas City. Robert received a master degree from Wichita State University in Communication. He also received the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Minority Training Fellowship to study Management and Business at Harvard University in 1980.

Robert began his professional career in 1974 working for the ABC affiliate, KAKE-TV, in Wichita, Kansas which he earned a Regional Emmy Award as a reporter and program producer, where he produced the first Hispanic television program in the Midwest. He later became the CEO and President of radio stations in Kansas, Missouri and Texas.

Since helping organize the Latinos of Tomorrow from its beginnings in 2004, Mr. Barrientos has been the groups Adult Senior Advisor. The Latinos of Tomorrow is the largest student/youth organization in the Midwest with over 150 members serving over 300 students each year through its informational and educational programs.

**Kenneth M. Burke, *Washington University, St. Louis***

With a Masters in International Relations and a Masters in Adult and Higher Education, Kenneth M. Burke is a continuing graduate student at the University College at Washington University. With a modest number of publications, his academic work proves to be unique and interdisciplinary. Kenneth contributed to the 2009 Cambio de Colores conference and has presented research for the Midwestern Association of Latin American Studies conference in the past. Kenneth's interest in Latin America developed from his service with the Peace Corps in Paraguay, South America. He currently works for the St. Louis Public Schools.

**Ethriam Cash Brammer**, *Center for Chicano-Boricua Studies, Wayne State University*

Ethriam Cash Brammer is a Chicano writer and scholar from El Centro, California.

He holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in Creative Writing from San Francisco State University and has translated a number of significant works of early Latino literature, including *The Adventures of Don Chipote: When Parrots Breast Feed*, by Daniel Venegas (Arte Público Press, 2000); *Lucas Guevara*, by Alirio Díaz Guerra (Arte Público Press, 2003); and, *The Texas Sun*, by Conrado Espinoza (Arte Público Press, 2007).

His most recent journal article, entitled “‘Keepin’ it Real’ with the Translation of *El sol de Texas: The Recovery and Translation of Shared Mexican-American Literary Patrimony*,” was published in Volume VII of the *Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage Anthology*, edited by Gerald Poyo and Tomás Ybarra-Frausto.

He currently serves as the Associate Director of the Center for Chicano-Boricua Studies at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan.

**Kathryn Chval**, *University of Missouri*

Kathryn Chval is an Assistant Professor and Co-Director of the Missouri Center for Mathematics and Science Teacher Education at the University of Missouri. Dr. Chval is also a Principal Investigator for the Facilitating Latino’s Success in Elementary Mathematics Project, funded by the National Science Foundation. Prior to joining University of Missouri, Dr. Chval worked for the National Science Foundation and the University of Illinois at Chicago. Dr. Chval’s research interests include (1) effective preparation models and support structures for teachers across the professional continuum, (2) effective elementary teaching of underserved populations, especially Latino English language learners, and (3) curriculum standards and policies.

**German Cutz**, *University of Illinois Extension*

German Cutz provides leadership in Extension Programming for Hispanic/Latino audiences throughout the state of Illinois. He works to identify opportunities for Spanish-Language Extension education throughout Illinois. He focuses on developing and implementing Extension programming in four core areas: Agriculture, Community and Economic Development, Youth Development, and Technology.

He conducts needs assessments on Hispanic concerns at community, county and state levels. Since 2005, he has committed to teaching technology to Hispanic children, youth and adults. He has developed the following

computer programs: Escape to PowerPoint Adventure, Looking Back, Moving Forward, Learning Math with Games, and Introduction to Word. He also teaches cultural sensitivity and identifies new program delivery methods for reaching the growing number of Hispanic/Latino families.

German Cutz is an expert on program planning, participatory methodologies and competency-based instructional objectives. He worked in Guatemala as national training coordinator for a World Learning Inc.-USAID-Guatemala. For three years he trained teachers, community leaders, volunteers, nurses, and small farmers in participatory methodologies. He has also teaching experience in subject areas such as rural development, cooperative organization's management, business, and languages. He has taught at Rafael Landivar University-Guatemala, San Carlos University of Guatemala, Ball State University in Indiana, and University of Illinois Extension.

German Cutz has published in *Education as Change* in South Africa, *Convergence* in Canada, *Adult Education Quarterly*, *Grolier Publishing Company*, and *Journal of Extension in the United States*. He is co-author of a book entitled, "Fundamentos y Práctica de la Educación Participativa [Foundations and Practice of Participatory Education] published in Spanish in Guatemala (1992) and author of the book, "Alfabetizando a Educadores de Adultos [Making Adult Educators Literate]" (under review).

Education: Ed.D. in Adult and Community Education, M.A. in Natural Resources and Environmental Management, M.A. in Adult and Community Education and Participatory Methodologies (Ball State University, Muncie-Indiana), M.A. in University Teaching and B.S. in Business Administration (San Carlos University of Guatemala); additional degrees in Cooperative Organization Management and Agronomy.

**April Dirks-Bihun, Mount Mercy College, Iowa**

Dr. April Dirks-Bihun joined Mount Mercy's Social Work Department in 2008 and received her Ph.D. in Social Work from the University of Iowa. She has extensive clinical experience in the mental health field and in private practice. As a therapist, she specialized in narrative therapy, crisis intervention, depression, child abuse, and other emotional issues. Special topics of interest in teaching and research are child welfare, cultural competency, suicide, at-risk youth, Latino families, trauma, and human sexuality. Her research has been on strain theory and suicidal ideation among maltreated adolescents as well as child welfare and immigration among Latino families.

**Pedro Dozi**, *University of Missouri*

An Angolan native and a Cambio Center student fellow, is currently a doctoral candidate in agricultural economics, with an emphasis on household and economic development at the University of Missouri–Columbia. He has worked with the World Food Program–Angola as a vulnerability mapping and food security analyst; assisted in the development of rural income generating projects with the German Development Agency (GTZ) in Mozambique; and also worked with the Angolan Ministry of Agriculture in developing food security programs aimed at improving the precarious poverty situation.

**Donald E. Eggerth**, *National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Cincinnati, OH*

Dr. Donald Eggerth is a Senior Team Coordinator with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. He is also a Research Fellow with the Consortium for Multicultural Psychology Research at Michigan State University and an Affiliate Faculty Member with the Department of Psychology at Colorado State University.

**Angela Ferguson**, *American Immigration Lawyers Association*

Angela J. Ferguson is a partner in the Kansas City office of Austin & Ferguson, LLC and has been an immigration attorney since 1989. The firm is dedicated solely to the practice of immigration law. Ms. Ferguson has served as the Chair of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) for Missouri and Kansas, 1999-2001, and 2006-2007; Vice Chair, 1997-1999. She has served as faculty for AILA, Kansas, Missouri, Florida and Illinois Bar Association continuing legal education programs and was an Adjunct Professor of Immigration Law at Washburn School of Law in Topeka from 2000-2008 and is a Clinical Instructor for the Univ. of Kansas School of Law immigration law clinic.

**Lisa Flores**, *University of Missouri*

Lisa Y. Flores is an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational, School, and Counseling Psychology. She has expertise in the career development of women and Latino/as, math/science domains, and social cognitive career theory and has published (37 journal articles, 8 book chapters, 5 encyclopedia entries) and presented (over 100 national conference presentations) extensively in these areas. She has expertise in conducting quantitative (structural equation modeling, multi-group analysis, multiple regressions, factor analysis) and qualitative (consensual qualitative

research) analyses. She is currently Editor of the Journal of Career Development and Associate Editor of the Journal of Counseling Psychology, and has served on the Editorial Boards of The Counseling Psychologist, Journal of Counseling Psychology, and Career Development Quarterly.

She is associate professor in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, Division of Applied Social Sciences at the University of Missouri (MU). She is a MU Cambio Center Fellow, and directs the Assets Accumulation in Three New Settlement Communities in Missouri, research focused on the strategies that Latino newcomers develop to settle, get by and get ahead in rural communities of the Midwest.

**Michael Flynn**, *National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Cincinnati, OH*

Michael Flynn has been a Public Health Advisor with the Training Research and Evaluation Branch of NIOSH since December, 2004. He is the project officer for several multi-year field studies involving immigrant workers on a range of topics from construction safety to tuberculosis. This research focuses on developing and evaluating tailored interventions promoting occupational safety and health as well as identifying pre and post training conditions that facilitate and hinder occupational safety among immigrant workers. Mr. Flynn has presented research both domestically and internationally at conferences such as the *12<sup>th</sup> International Metropolis Conference*, the *Seventh International Conference on Occupational Stress and Health*, and the *68<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology*.

Mr. Flynn has an extensive history of working with the Latino community. Prior to coming to NIOSH, he was the director of Su Casa Hispanic Ministry Center in Cincinnati. This agency had a broad outreach and advocacy mission within the local immigrant community. In 2004 he was awarded the *Nuestra Familia* award by the Ohio Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs. He has also worked for non-governmental organizations in Guatemala, Mexico and California on a variety of projects ranging from rural development to human rights. Mr. Flynn has a undergraduate degree in anthropology from the University of Notre Dame and is nearing completion of a graduate degree in medical anthropology at the University of Cincinnati.

**María Galarza-Heras**, *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

Maria Galarza-Heras is a graduate student whose work focuses on the ability of immigrant families to respond positively to the adverse situations they face, particularly those related to child care. Steve Tran is a graduate student interested in issues of acculturation among immigrant adolescents and adults.

**Brandi N. Geisinger**, *Iowa State University*

Brandi Geisinger is a feminist researcher and graduate student in sociology at Iowa State University. She focuses her interests on issues of inequality and patriarchy in the United States. After graduation, she intends to pursue her Ph.D. in psychology and continue her research in these areas.

**Mary Giovagnoli**, *Immigration Policy Center, American Immigration Council*

Mary Giovagnoli is the Director of the Immigration Policy Center, a division of the American Immigration Law Foundation. Prior to joining the IPC, Mary was the Senior Director of Policy for the National Immigration Forum. From 1996-2004, Mary practiced law as an attorney with the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security, serving first as a trial attorney and associate general counsel with the INS, and, following the creation of DHS, as an associate chief counsel for United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. During that time she specialized in refugee and asylum law. In 2005, Mary became the senior advisor to the Director of Congressional Relations at USCIS. In 2007, she received a Congressional Fellowship from USCIS to serve for a year in Senator Edward M. Kennedy's office where she worked on comprehensive immigration reform and refugee issues. Prior to joining the government, she clerked for two years for the Honorable William T. Hart, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. Mary attended Drake University, graduating summa cum laude with a major in speech communication. She received a master's degree in rhetoric and a J.D. from the University of Wisconsin and spent over ten years teaching public speaking, argumentation and debate, and parliamentary procedure while pursuing her education.

**Alejandra Gudiño**, *University of Missouri Extension*

Alejandra is a Social Science professional with extensive research and service experience working with social networks and demographic changes. She Completed her MS in Anthropology and Museums in Mexico City and her MBA in Columbia, Missouri. Alejandra has been involved with integrating Latino newcomers to Missouri over the past ten years. Her work has included serving as Director of the After School Program through the Centro Latino where she also serves on the Board of Directors. She is a Certified Relationship Enhancement Program Leader and provides relationship education to Latino couples; is a Research Fellow at the Cambio Center University of Missouri; and is the Co-Chair of the workgroups "Strengthening Families and Family Involvement in Education Workgroup" for the NCERA: Latinos and Immigrants in Midwestern Communities, Inter- State University Network.



**Emily Hager, *University of Missouri-St. Louis***

Emily Hager is currently a PhD Student at the University of Missouri-St. Louis in the division of Teaching and Learning, with special interests in Teaching ESL and Immigration Policy. This project was completed in coordination with UM-St. Louis, St. Louis University and MIRA.

**Pilar S. Horner, *Michigan State University and Julian Samora Research Institute***

Dr. Horner is an Assistant Professor at Michigan State University with a joint appointment in the Julian Samora Research Institute and the School of Social Work. Her areas of research are in substance use and abuse, neighborhood effects, qualitative methodologies, HIV/AIDS among Latinos, and cultural competence in organizations. She received her M.S.W. and a Ph.D. in the joint program for Social Work and Sociology from the University of Michigan.

**Anne Dannerbeck Janku, *Missouri Office of State Courts***

Anne Dannerbeck Janku, Ph.D. is the manager of a 14 person research unit in the Missouri Office of State Courts Administrator. Prior to assuming this position, she was a research assistant professor, School of Social Work, University of Missouri-Columbia. She has been involved in numerous studies on immigration in Missouri, including a US Dept. of Agriculture, National Research Initiative project which includes the current study. Her work in this area has been shaped by the question of how the context of reception impacts the lives of newcomers and long time residents of new settlement communities. She has worked and studied in Europe, Africa, and the Americas. She holds Master's degrees in international Relations (University of South Carolina) and Agricultural Economics (Purdue University). Her doctorate is in Consumer and Family Economics (University of Missouri).

**Stephen Jeanetta, *University of Missouri Extension***

Stephen Jeanetta is State Extension Specialist for Community Development Process and Assistant Extension Professor in Rural Sociology where he serves as coordinator for the Community Development Academy and provides leadership to programs in Organizational Development and Nonprofit Management, Community and Economic Planning and Building Inclusive Communities.

**Jean Kayitsinga**, *Julian Samora Research Institute, Michigan State University*

Dr. Jean Kayitsinga is a Visiting Assistant Professor at the Julian Samora Research Institute (JSRI) at Michigan State University. He received his Ph.D. in 1999 from the department of sociology at Michigan State University. His areas of specialization include rural sociology, sociology of families, demography, research methods and statistical methodologies. His current research focuses on racial and ethnic disparities in childhood and adolescent obesity, focusing on the effects of family and neighborhood social capital. His previous research involvement encompasses the areas of work, poverty, gender and family, intimate partner violence, nutrition, and child mortality. He is currently working on a series of research projects, including poverty and health of Latino children in the Midwest, the well-being of Latinos in the Midwest, and demographic profiles of Latinos in the Midwest.

**Mary Ann Lavin**, *Casa de Salud, St. Louis, and Saint Louis University*

Mary Ann Lavin is an associate professor at Saint Louis University School of Nursing and Clinical Services Director at Casa de Salud in St. Louis, Missouri. Her background includes nursing experience in Bolivia and Ecuador. Her publications include works on the use of community development and interprofessional practice models in healthcare delivery systems. She is a graduate of Saint Louis University School of Nursing and Harvard School of Public Health. She is a member of the American Academy of Nursing and the American Nurses Association.

**M. Kay Libbus**, *University of Missouri*

M. Kay Libbus, RN, DrPH, is a professor at the MU Sinclair School of Nursing and teaches public health in nursing and the new Masters of Public Health Program. She has a courtesy appointment to the Department of Women and Gender Studies. For the past 21 years her research interests have been in topics surrounding the health of women and children particularly in high risk and vulnerable populations. She has done work in barriers to successful breastfeeding, intentionality of pregnancy (in South Africa and the U.S.), fatigue in well women, barriers to contraception, and barriers to prenatal care.

**Rubén Martínez**, *Julián Samora Research Institute, Michigan State University*

Dr. Rubén O. Martínez, Director of the Julián Samora Research Institute at Michigan State University, is a nationally known scholar with expertise in the areas of higher education, race, and ethnic relations and diversity leadership. His research focuses on leadership and institutional change, education and ethnic minorities, youth development, and environmental justice. He has two co-authored books : 1) Chicanos in Higher Education and Diversity and 2) Leadership in Higher Education. His edited volume on Latinos in the Midwest will be out this year, and is working on a fourth, titled Diversity and Public Administration. He is the editor of the *Latinos in the United States* book series with the Michigan State University Press.

**Mary Meinhardt**, *Binational Health Week Planning Committee and Volunteer for Sacred Heart Church, Troy, Missouri*

Mary Meinhardt was born and raised in North Central Missouri, the oldest of six children. She obtained a BS degree from NEMO state Teachers College (Truman University) in 1971, an MS from George Peabody College in 1976 (both in Special Education), and an Ed. S. degree in School Psychology from the University of Missouri at Columbia in 1993.

She has worked at Rolla and Hannibal at Regional Centers for the Developmentally Disabled between 1971 and 1986, and for the Fort Zumwalt School District beginning in August 1994. She became involved with the Hispanic Community in October 2005 when Sacred Heart Church at Troy Missouri began offering Spanish services. She maintains a close relationship with the community in Lincoln County. She is currently involved in helping to organize the Fourth Annual Bi-National Health Week in the Tri-county area of Lincoln, Warren and St. Charles Counties and helps to organize volunteers when the Mexican Mobil Consul visits the St. Louis area.

**Irazema Mendoza**, *University of Kansas Medical Center, Kansas City*

Irazema Mendoza is a Research Assistant in the University of Kansas Medical Center (KUMC) in the Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health. She has a bachelor's degree in Psychology from the Universidad de las Américas, A.C. from Mexico City. Her passion for her own community has guided her choice to work in health related projects in the Latino community of recent immigrants. Since she arrived in Kansas City in 2008, she has been highly involved with Latino organizations, such as the Coalition of Hispanic Women Against Cancer as an active member and secretary and MANA- A National Latina Organization as an active member and treasurer. At KUMC she has been working closely with El Centro's promotores de salud program, where she works closely to the project director to implement the program. She also works as a bilingual smoking cessation counselor for an NIH-funded

trial telemedicine for Smoking Cessation in Rural Primary Care- Connect to Quit across the state of Kansas (Richter, P.I.) and as a primary translator, from English to Spanish, for the NIH-funded disease management for smokers in Rural Primary Care- KANQUIT II across the state of Kansas (Ellerbekc, P.I.).

**Stephanie O'Donnell**, *Casa de Salud, St. Louis*

Stephanie O'Donnell is the Administrative Director for Casa de Salud. She graduated magna cum laude from St. Louis University and recently completed a Coro fellowship in public affairs. During this time, she worked with the Regional Health Commission, the St. Louis County Municipal League, and the YWCA, among others. Stephanie is Peruvian American and was educated in Singapore, Dubai, U.A.E. and Madrid, Spain as well as in the United States.

**Keila E. Peña-Hernández**, *University of Missouri*

Keila E. Peña-Hernández is a doctoral student in health informatics. Ms. Peña-Hernández obtained her BS degree from the Interamerican University of Puerto Rico and an MT degree from Sacred Heart University in San Juan, PR. Her research interests are in consumer health informatics, cancer disparities, information management, Latino Health, health promotion, developing and evaluating methods and applications to support consumer(s) decision making as well as the use of health information that promotes health literacy.

**Jacob Prado**, *Consulate of Mexico, Kansas City*

Jacob Prado is a career member of the Mexican Foreign Service since 1989, currently holding the rank of Counselor. After completing his diplomatic training, he was appointed head of the International Social Organizations Desk at the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Relations, and subsequently head of the U.S. Domestic Politics Desk. During those years he also taught U.S. Foreign Policy, U.S. History and Mexican History to senior undergraduate students at the *Universidad de las Américas – Puebla*.

Consul Prado has represented Mexico as Deputy Consul General in Vancouver, B.C., Canada; Austin, Texas, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In this last capacity, he served as Acting Consul of Mexico for the States of Pennsylvania and Delaware, as well as Southern New Jersey.

Before being appointed to his current position, his last assignment was at the Embassy of Mexico to the United States, where he served for five years as Counselor for Latino Affairs. His responsibilities included improving opportunities for the Mexican communities in the U.S. by promoting

communication and collaboration with Mexican and Latino leaders and organizations at the national level. Born in Puebla, Mexico in 1965, Mr. Prado obtained a Bachelor of Arts' degree with a major in International Relations, and a Master's degree in American Studies, both at the *Universidad de las Américas - Puebla*.

Consul Prado arrived in Kansas City on September 15, 2008. The Consulate of Mexico in Kansas City has jurisdiction over the states of Kansas and Missouri, and Western Oklahoma.

**Jennifer Rafanan**, *Missouri Immigrant and Refugee Advocates (MIRA), St. Louis*

Jennifer Rafanan is the Executive Director of Missouri Immigrant & Refugee Advocates (MIRA), a coalition of more than 45 organizations across Missouri that advocates for the basic rights of immigrants and refugees and provides education on immigration issues and policy. In addition to her administrative and development duties, Ms. Rafanan has acted as a lobbyist and spokeswoman for the organization, authored numerous policy briefs, and most recently, joined with the Missouri Association for Social Welfare to publish an analysis of Missouri's new immigration law. Ms. Rafanan has spoken at national, state, and local conferences and events on immigration and advocacy and has guest lectured at universities throughout Missouri.

Prior to joining MIRA, Ms. Rafanan served first as a community organizer. She then became the Pennsylvania Field Director for MoveOn Political Action and later served as Deputy Field Director for a targeted congressional race. In these positions, she instituted innovative volunteer recruitment, training, and development strategies as well as get out the vote efforts especially targeted for rural communities.

Ms. Rafanan holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Art History from the University of Chicago. She currently serves on the Core Committee for the Inter-Faith Committee on Latin America, the Board of the Peace Economy Project and the Advisory Boards of Catholic Charities Community Services Southside and Harriett's List. She is a member of the Professional Latino Action Network (PLAN), St. Louis Rescue and Restore Coalition to Combat Human Trafficking, the ACLU Immigrant Rights Project, the Refugee and Immigrant Consortium (RIC), and the Young Asian Professionals Association. Both the St. Louis Coalition for Human Rights and Interfaith Legal Services for Immigrants have recently recognized Ms. Rafanan for her work on immigration issues.

**Marcela Raffaelli**, *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

Marcela Raffaelli is a Professor in the Department of Human & Community Development at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She focuses on issues of family adaptation and adolescent development in culturally and economically diverse populations.

**Beth Richards**, *Missouri Arthritis and Osteoporosis Program, University of Missouri*

Beth Richards is the Director of the Missouri Arthritis and Osteoporosis Program (MAOP) and has led this effort since March 2003 under the University of Missouri-Columbia and contractor for the Department of Health and Senior Services. Beth oversees and is responsible for coordination, planning and daily operation of the MAOP including management of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention arthritis funding and oversight of seven Regional Arthritis Center contracts. The primary focus of the MAOP and Regional Arthritis Centers is implementation of evidence-based self-management programs.

Ms. Richards is an active supporter and partner to the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (also serving as current Chair Elect to the Arthritis Council), the Arthritis Foundation, and the American Pain Foundation.

Ms. Richards holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Therapeutic Recreation from Central Missouri State University and is a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS).

**Mercedes Saint Elin**, *Alianzas, University of Missouri Extension, Institute for Human Development, University of Missouri- Kansas City*

Mercedes is the coordinator of Alianzas, a program of the University of Missouri Extension and the University of Missouri – Kansas City Institute for Human Development. Previously, Mercedes was the director of Migrant Farmworkers Project of Legal Aid of Western Missouri.

Born in Lima, Mercedes earned an LL.M. in Public International Law from the University of Geneva, Switzerland. She specialized in the international protection of human rights with an emphasis in social and cultural rights and right to education.

Since 2009, Mercedes has been a member of the MU Extension Diversity Catalyst Team.

**David Schneider, Casa de Salud, St. Louis, and Saint Louis University**

Dr. Schneider is a member of the board of directors of Casa de Salud and the chairman and a professor of Family and Community Medicine at the Saint Louis University School of Medicine. He joined the department in September of 2008, after 16 years on the faculty at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio, Texas where he served as Professor and Vice Chairman, and Director of Medical Student Education in the department of Family and Community Medicine. He had also been the Family Medicine Residency Director and Co-director of the UTHSCSA Center on Violence Prevention. He is a Past President of the Academy on Violence and Abuse and the Texas Academy of Family Physicians. Dr. Schneider graduated from the Boston University School of Medicine and received his Masters of Science in Public Health from the University of Missouri. Dr. Schneider's areas of interest are violence and its adverse health effects, substance abuse, medical education, and women's health.

**Natalia Suárez, University of Kansas Medical Center, Kansas City**

Natalia Suárez is a research assistant at the University of Kansas Medical Center-Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health. She assists with distinct academic research projects addressing health concerns within Kansas City's Latino population and does English to Spanish translations of various research materials. Much of her work is dedicated to communicating research by means of presentations and publications. Ms. Suárez is also a volunteer at the Coalition of Hispanic Women Against Cancer and is currently completing her Master in socio-cultural anthropology from the University of Kansas-Lawrence, and expects to graduate this summer. Her master thesis is on the expression of Latinidad at soccer games in Kansas City. She earned her BA in International Studies from the Universidad de las Américas, in Puebla, Mexico.

**Jennifer Tello-Buntin, Julian Samora Research Institute, Michigan State University**

Jennifer Tello-Buntin is a Visiting Assistant Professor at the Julian Samora Research Institute at Michigan State University. She received her Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Chicago in 2010. In her research, she examines the ways that receiving community institutions transform in response to the presence of a transnational immigrant population. Her work investigates the ways that assimilation and transnationalism may occur simultaneously and the implications of this for both immigrant and non-immigrant residents.

**Carrie Tyler**, *Centro Latino de Salud, Educación y Cultura*

Carrie Tyler is the Board of Immigration Appeals Accredited Representative (Before USCIS) for Centro Latino in Columbia. She handles legal immigration cases and counsel clients on their immigration needs. She has also worked assisting victims of Human Trafficking and educating the public on Human Trafficking. From 2002 – 2006, she was the founder and executive director of a volunteer-run nonprofit organization in Marshall, Missouri created to assist Latinos in Central Missouri called CLARO - Centro Latino de Apoyo, Recursos y Oportunidades (Centro Latino of Support, Resources and Opportunities). She is originally from Escondido (San Diego), California and moved to Marshall, Missouri in July of 2001 and have always worked with the Latino community in various capacities.

**Corinne Valdivia**, *University of Missouri*

She is associate professor in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, Division of Applied Social Sciences at the University of Missouri (MU). She is a MU Cambio Center Fellow, and directs the Assets Accumulation in Three New Settlement Communities in Missouri, research focused on the strategies that Latino newcomers develop to settle, get by and get ahead in rural communities of the Midwest.

**Carmen Vallejo**, *Binational Health Week volunteer in Kansas City Metropolitan area*

Carmen Vallejo was born and raised in San Salvador, the Capital City of The Republic of El Salvador. She was the Secretary of the President of The Republic of El Salvador. In 1990 due to the civil war in El Salvador, she moved to the United States to be reunited with her children who had to leave El Salvador in 1988. She loves spending quality time with her four daughters and eight grandchildren.

Carmen was educated in El Salvador and the United States. She has worked with the Hispanic/Latino Community in the Kansas City Metropolitan Area since 1992, as a Parent Educator, Doula, Childbirth Educator, Spanish Interpreter and Translator in medical, and legal settings, as well as in social services venues.

Carmen is a volunteer Community Navigator with the Alianzas Cultural Academy. For four years, she has volunteered and supported Binational Health Week events in the Greater Kansas City area and in Saint Joseph. She enjoys helping the Hispanic community.



**Christina Vasquez-Case**, *Alianzas, University of Missouri Extension, Institute for Human Development, University of Missouri- Kansas City*

Christina Vasquez Case is originally from Tucson, Arizona. She earned a Doctorate and Master's Degrees from the University of Missouri in Columbia. She was one of the first researchers at MU to collaborate on research about Hispanic populations in Missouri. She earned her Bachelor's Administration from Lincoln University, Jefferson City, Missouri and an Associate of Science in Business Administration from Cochise Community College, Sierra Vista, Arizona.

Christina is the Director of ALIANZAS, a program of the University of Missouri Extension and the University Of Missouri Kansas City Institute Of Human Development. She has presented at local, state, national and international venues.

She currently serves as *Consejera* (Advisor) for the Institute of Mexicans Abroad (IME) 2009-2011. In addition, she is a Lieutenant Colonel in the Missouri Army National Guard.

**Daniel Vélez Ortiz**, *Michigan State University and Julian Samora Research Institute*

Dr. Vélez is an Assistant Professor at Michigan State University with a joint appointment in the Julian Samora Research Institute and the School of Social Work. His areas of research are in mental health services, cultural competence, Latino older adults, and organizational factors. He is from Puerto Rico and has been in the Midwest since he left the island to study at Purdue University where he earned an A.S. in Organizational Leadership and a B.A. in Psychology. He earned an M.S.W. and a Ph.D. in Social Work from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

**Angela Wiley**, *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

Angela Wiley is an Associate Professor with an Extension Appointment, focuses on promoting resilience among ethnically diverse families.